



News

U.S. Rep. Adam Putnam (Fla.-12)

Central Florida: Hillsborough, Osceola and Polk counties

March 29, 2007
IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Putnam Introduces Student Protection Act

Legislation Protects Children from Sexual Misconduct at School

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Adam H. Putnam (R-Fla.) today introduced the Student Protection Act of 2007, legislation that would develop a national system of oversight for States for sexual misconduct in elementary and secondary school systems, and provide all States with information on educators who have been disciplined in other States.

“I have been deeply disturbed to learn of the lack of safeguards in place to protect students from the sexual advances of educators,” said Putnam, the Chairman of the House Republican Conference. “It is abundantly clear that at every level of our current educational structure there are flaws when it comes to reporting, investigating and communicating such occurrences. States currently lack a clear definition of describing what constitutes inappropriate behavior by educators and there is no uniform set of guidelines in place for reporting and investigating such allegations.”

Important elements of this legislation include:

- A uniform reporting requirement for educators accused of sexual misconduct;
- The creation of a body within each state to be responsible for receiving and investigating allegations of sexual misconduct by educators;
- Policies for reporting and investigating allegations of sexual misconduct, as well as training for investigators performing investigations;
- Establishment of a toll-free number for reporting allegations of sexual misconduct; and
- A nationwide database of educators who have committed acts of sexual misconduct that is made available to the public.

“Providing a safe environment for our children to learn in is of paramount importance. The predatory acts of a few bad teachers threatens to cast a shadow over the amazing job that educators do every day in preparing our youth to tackle the challenges and opportunities they will face,” Putnam concluded. “It is my hope that by implementing a national system of standards for oversight, reporting and investigation of sexual misconduct by educators – and by bringing transparency to the system – we can better ensure the safety of our children.”

Since 2001, Putnam has represented Florida’s 12th Congressional District, which includes most of Polk County and portions of Hillsborough and Osceola counties. As chairman of the Republican Conference, he is the third ranking member of his party’s leadership in the House of Representatives.